

**Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.**  
**Social Media and Internet Marketing Guide for Authors**

*I. What We'll Be Doing*

*II. How You Can Help Us*

*III. What You Can Do*

## I. What We'll Be Doing to Promote Your Book Online

From websites, blogs, and online catalogs to a wide range of social media outlets, we do our very best to promote our books on the Internet as broadly as possible.

### **Eerdmans.com**

Every book we publish has its own book page on Eerdmans.com, where we include basic product information, a cover image, a short summary, a preview excerpt, excerpts from and/or links to major reviews, information about major awards or honors, biographical information about the author, and (most importantly) an easy way for readers to purchase or preorder your book directly from us. Forthcoming books are added to our website for backorder as soon as a critical mass of prepublication information has been determined, including the ISBN, cover image, price, page count, and format.

To the extent that we are able due to the restraints of space and time, we also feature books on our website's homepage, in special promotional pages, on the educators and ministers pages, and in other prominent locations around the site.

### **Amazon.com (and all the rest)**

As soon as the basic specs and details on your book are finalized and determined, we'll post the book to Amazon, Ingram, BN.com, and other major websites via our ONIX (ONline Information eXchange) feed.

### **Edelweiss**

All of our books are featured in one or more of our online catalogs on Edelweiss (edelweiss.abovethetreeline.com), the publishing and bookselling industries' preferred online source for book information.

### **EerdWord Blog**

Many of our books\* will be featured in some way or another on our blog (eerdword.wordpress.com). We may:

- Interview you
- Invite you to contribute a guest post
- Share a brief excerpt from your book
- Discuss your book (or invite you to discuss your book) in a special post related to seasonal events or trending news stories (Christmas, papal resignation, 9/11 anniversary, etc.)
- Alert readers to major reviews, awards, and media appearances.
- Feature your book in an in-house review by Rachel Bomberger, Laura Bardolph Hubers, or one of our other staff members.

\*Please note that not all of our books lend themselves well to this type of promotion and, therefore, not every book will be featured on *EerdWord*.

### **Facebook**

Both Eerdmans (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.) and EBYR (Eerdmans Books for Young Readers) are active on Facebook. We use our company profiles to share interesting information about our books, announce major release dates, promote blog posts, and more. Each profile aims to publish one to two status updates per day to maximize reader interest and engagement — this policy, naturally, limits the amount of attention we can pay to each of our 120+ new

books per year. When possible, we tag relevant groups and individuals to maximize the impact of each post.

### **Twitter**

We are active on Twitter (@eerdmansbooks; @ebyrbooks) and tweet several times a day most weekdays. The content of these tweets is similar and often parallel to that of our Facebook status updates (though more concise).

### **E-Newsletters**

Both Eerdmans and EBYR send monthly e-newsletters to several thousand subscribers. In each newsletter, we feature new releases, reviews, awards, and other news items we think our readers will find interesting and relevant.

### **LibraryThing**

We do have a publisher profile on LibraryThing and upload information about our new and forthcoming titles to that site as soon as it is available. We also participate in the LibraryThing Early Reviewer Program, sending advance F&Gs of all children's picture books, ARCs of all children's novels, and advance proofs of select adult titles to LibraryThing users around the country.

### **YouTube**

While most of our online activity (understandably) centers around the written word, we do also have a dedicated YouTube video channel, where we post book trailers, author interviews, video footage from Eerdmans Bookstore events, and other interesting content as it becomes available. We also use our "favorites" list to direct readers to other interesting YouTube video content related to our books and authors.

### **Instagram**

In early 2013, we joined Instagram, a photo sharing app. On our photo feed there, we share pictures of works in progress, cover designs, new releases, conference appearances, author events, and more.

### **Pinterest**

EBYR is an active user of Pinterest, where we post cover images, snippets of interior artwork, author blog posts, book trailers, and other content related to books, young readers and artists, and more.

### **Tumblr**

Eerdmans just recently joined Tumblr, a blogging platform that works well for mid-length posts: things too long for Facebook or Twitter, but too short for EerdWord. It is also acceptable to post multiple times a day on Tumblr, whereas we try to keep EerdWord to just once a day. Tumblr is great for varied media: straight text, quotes, audio clips, video clips, and images are all easy to post here. We use Tumblr to cross-post our Instagram photos, share interesting quotes from books and blurbs or reviews, embed podcast and video clips, and anything else that might present itself and fits well in this medium.

## II. How You Can Help Us Promote Your Book Online

### Send In Your Author Publicity Form

If you haven't yet filled in the author publicity form sent to you by publicity assistant/author liaison Victoria Fanning, please do. It's tedious (we know), but the more completely you can fill it out and the sooner you can return it, the better we'll be able to promote your book in stores, in the broadcast and print media — and online.

### Give Some Thought to Your Author Photo

Please send us a *good* photo. Photos are really useful for adding a human element to all online content — and we find them especially useful for livening up author profile pages on our website and posts on our blog. These photos don't have to be professional or formal, but it does help if they're fairly high quality. Make sure your photo is clear, focused, and as high-resolution as possible — and please make sure it's at least somewhat flattering.

If the photo you're about to send is . . .

- Grainy,
- Goofy,
- Twenty years old,
- Has harsh or low lighting, weird shadows, or noticeable flash glare on your glasses,
- Features you in a screen-printed [Three Wolf Moon T-shirt](#),
- Or looks uncannily like a [Glamour Shot](#),

. . . please consider finding or taking another one to send us.

### Send Us a Few Interesting Stories

On your author publicity form, you'll notice a question near the end asking you to share any interesting anecdotes you may have about the book, its inception, or its relation to your real life.

Please do! Just like good-quality, non-goofy photographs, a couple of anecdotes can go a long way toward giving our online promotional efforts the human-interest angle they need to be truly effective, and beyond this, they are also highly valued by all Eerdmans staff working to promote your book in person, on the phone, and by email.

### Contribute to Our Blog

There is a very good chance that you will be invited at some point to contribute to our blog. We hope that you will respond promptly and enthusiastically to this invitation when it comes. We'll do our very best to offer you advice, suggest ideas, and give you the editorial support you need to create a successful blog post, even if you've never done it before.

### Let Us Know Where to Find You Online

Do you already have a Facebook fan page? Are you active on Twitter? Do you have a blog or a website? Are you a YouTube superstar? Please let us know! We can tag you, @mention you, include you on our blogroll, add your video to our YouTube favorites list, and engage in lots of mutually beneficial cross-promotional efforts — but only if we know you're out there!

### Connect with Us

You already know where we are (see above). If you're active in social media already, come find us. Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. Link to us from your blog or website. We'll definitely return the favor.

### **Send Us Your Latest News and Visuals**

Is the *New York Times Review of Books* featuring your book on the front page next weekend? Have you just found out your book is short listed for a Pulitzer? Will you be stopping by *The Daily Show* tomorrow night for a quick chat with Jon Stewart? Let us know! News items like these (even if they're not quite as earth-shattering) make great tweets — but we can't tweet what we don't know.

The same goes for photographs and videos. If you have videos or pictures of book-related events, works in progress—or even something as simple a snapshot of yourself jubilantly posing with your book—please send them on!

### **Stop By for a Video Interview**

If you're going to be in the Grand Rapids area and have an hour to spare, do let us know ahead of time. We'd love to welcome you to our offices at 2140 Oak Industrial for a quick and casual video interview.

### III. What You Can Do to Promote Your Book Online

Social media offers you an unprecedented opportunity to reach out directly to and build lasting relationships with your potential readers. When done right, social media will not just help you sell one book to one customer; it will also help you build a loyal base of engaged fans who enthusiastically buy and (even better) promote your books now and in the future, using what is perhaps the most powerful (and least controllable) advertising medium ever devised: word of mouth.

In the last few pages of this guide, we'll be introducing you to a number of possible tools and strategies you can use to promote yourself and your book(s) online. These include:

- [General principles](#) for social media marketing
- How to set up and make the most of a [Facebook fan page](#)
- How to [get started on Twitter](#)
- How to [start a blog](#)
- Whether — and how — to [be active on Pinterest](#)
- How to create an author profile on [GoodReads](#), [LibraryThing](#), and [Amazon Author Central](#)
- How to use [email](#) to promote your book
- [Resources](#) for further reading

Enjoy — and good luck!

### General Rules of Engagement for Social Media Marketing

- **Educate, inform, entertain, delight, share, engage, interact — then plug.** Try to spend no more than **20%** of your social media efforts talking about and promoting your book. Social media users hate hucksters and will tune you out in a moment if they think you're just online to sell books.
- **Remember that social media is about building relationships and engaging in conversations, *not* advertising products.** Measure your success less by *what you say* and more by *what others say* to and about you. Invite dialogue. Worry less about collecting customers and more about gaining fans and (even better) making friends. Rejoice when someone else interacts with your work (even if they're harshly critical of it) and don't be afraid to talk back in a friendly way.
- **Be human, be real, be transparent, be honest — or don't even try to do social media.** Web culture is marked by a low tolerance for phonies.
- **Be excellent.** The online community doesn't really care about your credentials. It hates hype. Your **personality, insight, intelligence, skill, good humor, and talent**, demonstrated on a moment-by-moment, day-by-day basis, are what will get you noticed on the web, so put some thought and time into what you post. (But not too much thought. Web culture also has very little patience for people who take themselves too seriously.)
- **Mind your p's and q's.** Be honest and open, yes, but be mindful also of the apostle Paul's advice to "be self-controlled and alert." Once stuff goes up on the web, it's nearly impossible to control who will see it and how far it's spread — and it never really goes away. Remember Anthony Weiner? So do we.
- **Be active.** No one who posts less than once a week gets taken seriously on Facebook or Twitter. If you decide to use these services, make sure you're willing to **log on at least once every couple of days**. You don't have to post every day (although it certainly doesn't hurt), but do take a little time regularly to **read and respond** to other people's posts. They'll love you for it.
- **(But not too active.)** People who post more than three or four times a day (unless they have really fascinating stuff to share) tend to get on everyone's nerves. Talking incessantly about yourself is a quick way to end up unfriended, unfollowed, and alone. (Just like in real life. Imagine that.)
- **Have fun.** Seriously, we mean that. Content that's fresh, lively, and unforced — stuff that you're really interested in and enthusiastic about, whatever it may be — is always appreciated on the web.

## Facebook Tips for Authors

Facebook provides a relatively easy and effective way for authors to promote their books. (If you're not yet on Facebook, please consider signing up, at least for the duration of your book's marketable print life.) Here are a few tips and ideas that may help you get started.

1. **Create an author fan page.** Due to privacy settings on personal pages, fan pages are eminently more useful for any kind of marketing and promotion than profile pages — and contrary to what the name connotes, you do not have to be an A-list celebrity or have millions of fans to create one. Facebook walks you through the simple process here: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>. Here are a few examples of author pages: [Rowan Williams](#), [Conor Cunningham](#), [John Townsend](#), [Dave Ramsey](#), [Tom Clancy](#).
2. **Make a friend an admin.** Note that you can make another person (perhaps a friend, student, or assistant,) an “administrator” of your page. This can be helpful if you are too busy to always update the page yourself. Simply ask that person to “like” your page and then click “Make Admin” next to their name in the list of people who like your page.
3. **Feature your book on your author fan page.** Use the application Static IFRAME Tab to add a tab on your profile page that features your book cover and information. You could make this your landing tab, which means this tab will be the first thing people see when they visit your page. Here is the link to this application: <http://www.facebook.com/iframehost?sk=info>.
4. **Post interesting content about your book.** This should be ongoing, but don't post more than twice a day to avoid making people feel like you are cluttering up their news feed. Possible content includes videos, status updates, book reviews, author talks, book signings, interviews about your book, speeches unrelated to your book but done by you, etc. You can see an example of this on our wall: <http://www.facebook.com/Eerdmans>.
5. **Start a book club.** You could start an online book group with your friends/fans and discuss the book in the discussions tab. Generate interest in the book group by promoting it on your wall.
7. Create a contest or promote a book giveaway on your wall. Although, Facebook does not allow people/companies to require that a person become a new friend or “like” a page in order to enter a drawing or contest run on a Facebook wall, you can easily run a contest on Facebook using a third party application. We like Rafflecopter (<http://www.rafflecopter.com/>), which offers free or low-cost ways to help you use giveaways to grow your online fanbase. You can read Facebook's rules for promotions here: [http://www.facebook.com/promotions\\_guidelines.php](http://www.facebook.com/promotions_guidelines.php).
8. **Ask your friends to review the book.** You could give copies to people who agree to publish a review of your book in a Facebook “note” on their wall. These notes would expand your reach to the friends of your friends, who will see the reviews in their news feeds. (While you're at it, ask them to review the book on Amazon, on GoodReads or LibraryThing, or on their personal or professional blogs as well. Every little bit helps!)
9. **Create an event page.** If you're visiting a bookstore, giving a lecture or reading, or hosting a book launch, considering publicizing it with a Facebook event page. You can share basic information about the event, invite friends, and keep track of RSVPs — and

every time one of your friends comments on or RSVPs to your event, it will increase the event's exposure on Facebook.

10. **Create a targeted Facebook ad.** These are relatively inexpensive and easy to make.

## How to Join (and Get the Most Out) of Twitter

Twitter is a social network that allows people to share short updates about their life and thoughts with followers. It's like a Facebook status feed, only shorter (tweets are limited to 140 characters apiece). If it's helpful, you can imagine Twitter as a news ticker that shares nothing but headline after headline, all day long.

### I'm already on Facebook. Should I really join Twitter?

Pop quiz! What do the following have in common?

- a. The Tahrir Square protests in Egypt.
- b. President Obama's 2012 reelection victory.
- c. Pope Francis.
- d. The assassination of Osama bin Laden.

The answer: Twitter. Egyptian protesters used Twitter to communicate and coordinate their activities during the Arab Spring. President Obama first announced his 2012 election victory on Twitter. Like his predecessor before him, Pope Francis tweets at @pontifex. And news of Osama Bin Laden's death was first leaked to the world . . . on Twitter.

So, if you have the time and interest, yes, you should be on Twitter. According to a [2010 study reported on in Forbes magazine](#), Twitter users are significantly more likely than Facebook users to (a.) buy the product of a brand they follow and (b.) recommend it to their friends. Even though Facebook trumps Twitter ten times over in the sheer vastness of its user base, Twitter is still a great medium through which to market your book.

### How is Twitter different from Facebook?

1. No Farmville. Facebook allows any number of third-party apps, some cool and useful, some completely asinine. Twitter does not.
2. No comments. If someone wants to chime in publicly on what you have to say, they're kind of out of luck on Twitter. They can reply to you (though there's not much space to put the reply in context) or share your tweet by "retweeting" it to their own followers (perhaps adding their own comment as they do), but that's about it.
3. No "friend requests." If you have a public profile on Twitter, anyone can follow you and you can follow anyone, without waiting for "friend request approval." In this way, a Twitter account is more like a fan page on Facebook than a personal profile. This makes Twitter ideal for celebrity groupies — and, if you're an author or celebrity looking to accumulate a few groupies of your own, it might just be ideal for you, too. Unlike Facebook's two-way relationship, following someone on Twitter is often one-directional. They may not follow you back.

### How do I join?

Visit [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), enter your full name (as it appears on your book covers, since this is how users will look you up), email address, and a password, and click "Join Now!" Twitter will guide you through the rest of the process.

### How can I get the most out of Twitter?

- Consider using a third-party platform. Certain sites, like [www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com), allow you to do much more with Twitter than you can through Twitter alone. You essentially allow these sites to log in to Twitter for you, then post your tweets through them to the larger Twitter network. These platforms (we use [www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com)) allow you to put in a long hyperlink (perhaps to an article you've published online or to a great review of your book) and automatically shorten it so that it will fit within Twitter's character count limit more easily. They allow you to track mentions of certain keywords on Twitter, pay attention to clicks, and post to multiple social media networks simultaneously.
- Even though the maximum character count for each tweet is 140 characters, try to keep yours to 120 (or even fewer, if you have a long username). This will make it easy for followers to retweet your posts without having to trim them down.
- Remember that Twitter loves casual language. This is not the place to be high-falutin'. Complete sentences — heck, complete words — are completely optional. (We personally think that using shorthand like "2" for "too" and "cuz" for "because," unless you're making an ironic or artistic statement, may be going too far, but not everyone on Twitter would agree with us.)
- Use links and pictures to draw people out of Twitter and into broader conversations. Even though it's impossible to say much in 140 (or 120) characters, the fact that Twitter allows you to link to external sites and photographs really broadens its potential. Put up catchy headlines with links on Twitter, for example, and you will quickly be able to expand the readership of your blog or website.
- Don't neglect to upload a profile photo. Twitter assigns an unflattering, unprofessional-looking egg image to anyone who doesn't upload their own photo. Twitter should guide you through this when you originally sign up — just make sure you have a photo picked out and saved on your computer so you can find it easily when the time comes.
- Twitter also allows you to upload a header photo, visible to anyone who comes by to check out your profile. It's definitely worth taking the trouble to put one up.
- Follow @eerdmansbooks and @ebyrbooks to see how we use Twitter.

### What are all those funny codes that show up in tweets?

Here's handy glossary to help you understand some of the less obvious Twitter lingo.

| Symbol | Name    | Meaning                     | Example                  |
|--------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| RT     | Retweet | Indicates a share or copied | RT @scotmcknight What is |

|       |                     |   |  |
|-------|---------------------|---|--|
|       |                     | message   | justice? <a href="http://ow.ly/2JgcQ">http://ow.ly/2JgcQ</a>   |
| @name | Reply or Mention    | Indicates a recipient or person mentioned or addressed in a tweet (public)                      | @ivpress Thanks for the free books!  |
| D     | DM (direct message) | Indicates a private message   | D clreese DM us your address so we can send you the book.  |
| #FF   | Follow Friday       | Indicates a twitterer worth following   | @eerdmansbooks publishes some great biblical studies resources... worth a follow! #FF  |
| #     | Hashtag             | Indicates a keyword (and allows you to participate in a broader conversation on a single topic) | Just finished <a href="#">#GreatLakes</a> Shipwrecks and Survivals. Here's my review: <a href="http://wp.me/p1cJiv-LG">http://wp.me/p1cJiv-LG</a> <a href="#">#fridayreads</a> |

\* See the Twitter Glossary page on Twitter.com for more explanations

## How to Start a Blog (and Why You Should)

For people who like to read, think, and discuss issues and ideas in greater depth than 140 or 320 characters (Twitter and Facebook's respective limits) allow, the blogosphere is far and away the most exciting corner of the web.

Blogs (the word originally comes from “weblogs”) allow writers to dig in and engage both readers and ideas in a way that simply isn't possible using any other form of social media.

Blogs can be formal or informal (though, as with everything on the web, informal tends to rule the day), highly organized or highly spontaneous. They can take the form of diaries; photojournals; social or cultural commentaries; commonplace books; thinly disguised collections of essays; de facto newspapers, newsletters, or magazines; discussion forums; or even serialized books. Whatever you want your blog to be . . . it can be.

### How can you get started?

We recommend using one of the three major free blogging sites, especially if you're a first-time blogger, since these provide users the widest array of services and support.

- [Blogger](#) (which offers this handy [introduction](#) to blogging) — [blogger.com](#)
- [WordPress](#) (official blogging site of [EerdWord](#), the Eerdmans blog) — [wordpress.com](#)
- [Tumblr](#) — [tumblr.com](#)

**Ready to start blogging?** Here are a few general hints and tips to help you create and maintain a successful blog.

- Keep it focused. The best blogs generally keep to a coherent theme or purpose. Is your blog about biblical studies? Try not to clutter it up with posts about how cute your dog is. Is your blog about religion in society? Don't use it to chronicle your Fijian vacation or marathon training. This isn't to say that blogs shouldn't offer a variety of interesting content, but more often than not, your readers follow your blog because they're interested in the *blog* and its *content*—not the manifold aspects of your daily life. Sorry to say it, but it's true.
- Keep it current. Yes, some bloggers clutter up RSS feeds with far too many posts per day, BUT . . . a much more common mistake is made when gung-ho writers start blogs and then fail to post often enough. As with any successful social media campaign, blogging requires engagement, commitment, and stamina. Try to post at least a couple times per week, or your readers will quickly forget about you.
- Keep it brief. Blog readers often consume dozens of blog posts per day. Make it easy for them to read and process yours quickly, and they'll reward you with their regular attention. Short posts (try not to exceed 500 words on a regular basis) with short paragraphs (one or two sentences apiece is fine—and much easier on the eye online) will make reading your blog feel like recreational reading instead of homework. Folks in the blogosphere have a handy acronym for blog posts that are too bulky: tl;dr. It stands for “Too Long—Didn't Read.” Take our advice: beware the Teal Dear!
- Remember your audience (and that you have one). The best blogs aim for a high level of reader engagement and try to tailor their content for a real-time readership. This reveals itself, ideally, in an active comment thread, widely acknowledged as one of the signs of a healthy blog. So, invite conversation. Listen to your readers—talk back to them, too.

Above all, try to find things to write about that you know they'll find interesting. If you're nervous about inappropriate comments, however, remember that most blogs allow you to moderate comments before they are posted and delete comments after they are posted, if you so desire.

- Read other blogs. Yes, this is important. Blogging is about conversations, and conversations must include listening as well as talking. Otherwise, you might as well be typing to a brick wall. Reading other people's blogs will give you a wealth of ideas for your own and links to recommend and discuss. It will show you what works and what doesn't. It will also give you a great deal of empathy for your own blog readers and commenters — especially if you take the trouble to comment now and again on blogs you read. What's more, when you link to other people's blogs from your own blog, they will often take notice and return the favor.
- Add photos to your posts whenever you can. These make it possible for people to share your posts on Pinterest and they give your links much more impact when they're shared on Facebook. If you don't have relevant photos of your own to share, head over to Wikimedia Commons (<http://commons.wikimedia.org>) to check out their selection of public domain images.
- If you are active on other social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, make sure that you're sharing links to your posts there. Many blogging services even give you the option of automating this cross-posting. Activate this feature, and whenever you publish a new blog post, a link will pop up automatically on your social media feeds.

## Whether — and How — to Be Active on Pinterest

**Pinterest** is the latest high-energy phenom to take the social media universe by storm—and for good reason: it's fun, easy to use, and highly addictive. In light of this, you and many other authors may want to know: would it be worthwhile for me to join Pinterest and promote my book there?

The answer to this question is a resounding . . . maybe. You and your book might benefit from an active presence on Pinterest **if . . .**

- You regularly post visual content — artwork, illustrations, photos, or movies — anywhere online.
- You blog frequently and are faithful about including pictures with your posts.
- You write on a relatively narrow topic and want to establish yourself as a go-to expert on that topic.
- You are a children's author or illustrator or write adult books for a general interest audience.

If you fit one of the above categories and do decide to jump into the ocean of over-stimulation that is Pinterest, here are a few **handy hints** to help you make the most of your promotional activity there.

- Just as elsewhere on the web, blatant advertising doesn't seem to work very well on Pinterest. Just be yourself; pin things YOU like, and people will follow because they like YOU and your taste.
- Try to pin images that are high-quality. Beautiful pictures get the most re-pins (this goes for your blog, too, if you have one -- if you'd like people to pin pictures from your blog, make sure there is a beautiful picture to pin!).
- Pin often, but not too much at a time. Do you get annoyed if your home feed is filled with pin after pin from just the same person, on the same topic? Likely others will, as well. Tip: if you set aside just one time to do all your pinning, avoid flooding others' feeds by "liking" pins you will come back and pin later ("liked" pins are public, but don't show up on the home feed).
- It may be hard to decide what boards to create; if you're unsure, start with the default boards Pinterest suggests. After a little while, assess whether you use all of them or not. If you want to pin something but don't have a place for it, create a new board! Also, use

creative names for the boards -- but not SO creative that it is unclear what the topic of the board is.

- Often, you can simply use the description a previous pinner used. Feel free to change it, though, if it doesn't sound like something you would say. Keep in mind that Pinterest can only search words in descriptions, not words on the image itself; if you'd like other pinners (who don't follow you) to find your pins, make sure you use a few keywords (Just think about what you would search to find something related to what you're pinning; i.e. "pancakes," "painting tips").
- Make sure you choose a category for your boards. This will pull your pins to the Pinterest categories (access from the pull-down menu at the top left) and increases the chance of someone interested in your pins to find them.
- Don't worry too much about it. The more you use Pinterest, the more you will get a feel for how others use it. Just have fun pinning things you like!

## **Social Media for Readers: GoodReads, LibraryThing, Amazon Author Central**

GoodReads and LibraryThing are two sites that allow readers to share book recommendations and reviews with other bibliophiles around the world. Users can list books they've read (or plan to read), rate them (1-5 stars), offer short reviews, and see what books are on their friends' bookshelves or to-read lists. Amazon Author Central gives authors a helpful toehold within the world's most formidable online bookstore.

Needless to say, these sites are ideal places for authors to devote a portion of their online marketing energies — and, if they have family members or friends who are eager to help promote the book, these sites can also be ideal outlets for that enthusiasm.

### **GoodReads**

The GoodReads author program “is a completely free feature designed to help authors reach their target audience — passionate readers.” GoodReads allows authors to customize their public profiles, publicize events, post related videos, lead discussion groups, give away promotional copies, and more.

Some tips directly from the Goodreads staff:

- Authors should join various groups as readers, not necessarily authors.
- Authors should gain many friends in Goodreads through sincere involvement in conversations about other books — if they only appear self-serving, it won't go over well with Goodreads users.
- When a book is published, the author should engage readers personally through Goodreads.

Visit <http://www.goodreads.com/author/program> for more information and to sign up.

### **LibraryThing**

When you become a LibraryThing Author, you'll have the opportunity to customize your public profile, publicize events, host author chats, network with other authors, participate in the Member Giveaways program (to score some great user reviews), and more.

Visit <http://www.librarything.com/about/authors> for more information and to sign up.

### **Amazon Author Central**

Whether you're ultimately a fan of the online bookselling behemoth or not, there's no denying that Amazon is a great place for an author to be.

Amazon Author Central lets you share information about yourself and your works with Amazon's millions of book shoppers. You can add your biography, photos, blog, video, tour events, and other information to your personalized author page. You can also gain access to Amazon's author support staff and access useful sales data about how and where your books are selling. Here's an example of what a well-put-together author page looks like:

[http://www.amazon.com/Seth-Godin/e/B000AP9EH0/ref=sr\\_tc\\_2\\_0?qid=1379440380&sr=1-2-ent](http://www.amazon.com/Seth-Godin/e/B000AP9EH0/ref=sr_tc_2_0?qid=1379440380&sr=1-2-ent)

Visit <http://authorcentral.amazon.com> to learn more or join.

## How to Use Email to Promote Your Book

Aside from our monthly e-newsletter (which we send to subscribers only), we in the Eerdmans Internet Marketing Department use email very sparingly. Sending out unwanted emails, we've found, can generate as much ill-will as good from the many recipients who resent the invasion of their inboxes with unwanted messages. Nothing damages a sender's credibility more than being branded a spammer!

Still, email is easy to use and even more universally used than social media — and it can be an effective way to promote books when used intelligently.

Here are two ways we recommend using email to promote your book.

### Announcement Email

It isn't inappropriate or intrusive to send a single email at the time of your book's release announcing its availability to everyone in your email network. On the contrary, it's a great idea to start your book promotion by connecting personally with the people with whom you already have a relationship — colleagues and family members, friends and acquaintances.

Be sure to include the following in your email:

- The final title of your book.
- A brief description.
- A link to your book's page at Eerdmans.com (or the bookstore of your choice).
- Information about any signings or readings coming up.
- An invitation to buy, read, review, and share information about the book.
- Links to your author blog, website, and social media pages, along with an invitation to follow you online. (Don't be shy!)

### Email Signature Line

Insert a subtle plug for your book every time you send an email with a customized email signature line.

Adding "author of . . ." under your name and title for the first few months after your book's release date can be an effective way to build awareness of the book among your correspondents.

## Recommended Resources

### Social Media

The Beginners Guide to Social Media

<http://mashable.com/2012/06/12/social-media-beginners-guide/>

10 Pro Tips for Writers Using Social Media

<http://mashable.com/2012/02/02/social-media-writers/>

9 Essential Social Media Tips for Beginners

<http://www.toprankblog.com/2010/06/9-essential-social-media-tips/>

### Blogging

7 Tips for New Bloggers

<http://www.houseunseen.com/2013/01/7-tips-for-new-bloggers.html>.

5 Blogging Mistakes You Don't Know You're Making

<http://freeingimperfections.com/blogging-mistakes-you-dont-know-youre-making/>

6 Blogging Tools I Can't Live Without

<http://freeingimperfections.com/6-blogging-tools-cant-live-without/>

A Beginner's Guide to Wordpress [VIDEO]

<http://www.2createawebsite.com/blogging/free-wordpress-tutorial.html>

### Facebook

The Beginner's Guide to Facebook

<http://mashable.com/2012/05/16/facebook-for-beginners/>

Create a Facebook Fan Page in 5 Minutes [VIDEO]

<http://michigandistrict.org/blog/2011/08/17/create-facebook-fan-page-5-minutes>

### Twitter

The Beginner's Guide to Twitter

<http://mashable.com/2012/06/05/twitter-for-beginners/>

4 Quick Tips for a Better Twitter Header

<http://mashable.com/2012/09/19/twitter-header-tips/>

## **YouTube**

10 Tips for Being Successful on YouTube [VIDEO]

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0z1C23xjys>

## **Pinterest**

Pinterest: A Beginner's Guide to the Hot New Social Network

<http://mashable.com/2011/12/26/pinterest-beginners-guide/>

Pinterest for Authors

<http://blog.bookbaby.com/2012/04/pinterest-for-authors-how-to-promote-your-writing-on-the-fastest-growing-website-ever/>

Best Practices for Authors on Pinterest

<http://www.novelpublicity.com/2013/01/best-practices-for-authors-on-pinterest-4-ways-to-build-a-relevant-following/>